

Assemblyman
PAUL KORETZ

Forty-second Assembly District

proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Teresa Stark
916-319-2042
916-715-2203 (cell)

Koretz Introduces Resolution In Support Of Senator Kennedy's Federal Hate Crimes Bill

Federal legislation will provide assistance to states and local jurisdictions to prosecute hate crimes.

(Sacramento) – Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) introduced Assembly Joint Resolution 34 today urging the President of the United States and Congress to pass the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2003 (LLEEA). This legislation, introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass), Gordon Smith (R-Ore) and Arlen Specter (R-PA), is designed to provide federal assistance to states and local jurisdictions to prosecute hate crimes.

This bill would add to federal hate crime laws real or perceived sexual orientation, gender and disability and will give federal authorities jurisdiction to intervene and support local authorities in investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

In 1998, the California Department of Justice received reports from local law enforcement agencies detailing more than 1800 hate crime offenses of which 69% involved a violent crime. Of that number, 64.8% were motivated by race or ethnicity, and 22.1% were motivated by the sexual orientation of the victim. There have been over 9,500 hate crimes based on sexual orientation reported to the FBI since 1991.

“The LLEEA is one of the most important pieces of legislation introduced in Congress this year and sends the strong message that hate motivated violence will not be tolerated,” Koretz said. “With the federal government as a partner, we can take a united stand against this kind of violence and be even more aggressive in prosecution of these crimes. Given the diversity of our state and the hate crimes we’ve experienced, California must weigh in to see that it passes.”

AJR 34 is co-authored by several legislators, including Assemblywoman Judy Chu, Chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Hate Crimes. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2003 has garnered significant bipartisan support since its introduction on May 1, with 49 original co-sponsors. The bill is endorsed by more than 175 law enforcement, civil rights, civic and religions organizations.

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